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25 JUL 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief/Ops/International Terrorism Group  
SUBJECT : Terrorism

1. Based on conversations in early May between representatives of your Group and this office on the subject of terrorism, it is our understanding that there is interest in exploring the means of understanding, dealing with and ameliorating this problem. Specifically, it is understood that the risk of Agency personnel overseas being taken hostage is a point of concern and that this may also apply to other official Americans abroad. It is also our understanding that you await our further thoughts and proposals on this matter. We accordingly provide the following comments, and we would be pleased to assist you in any way possible in this matter.

2. It is our opinion that certain OMS resources, particularly those of the Psychiatric Staff and the Psychological Services Staff, would be helpful to you. A joint effort by these staffs in what we would consider a behavioral science approach to the matter should provide helpful insights. Such an approach would be for the purpose of subjecting such experience as may already have been accumulated, either within or outside of the Agency, to the discipline and perspective of a behavioral science setting so that the resulting yield for the Agency would be as large and multidimensional as possible, with potential benefits having wider applicability beyond Agency confines. It seems reasonable that a series of concepts might be developed which could lend themselves to presentation in a variety of modes, from booklets to course presentations to moving picture shorts on the subject.

3. More specifically, in view of the fanatical manner in which terrorists seem to operate, it would seem desirable to gain knowledge about the historical antecedents of terrorism and its power to attract adherents. Political Science and

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31 December 1981

SUBJECT: Terrorism

Anthropology could be expected to be helpful here and consultative assistance in these areas would be available from our consultant staff. It would also be desirable that individuals from your Group, as well as any available people who have had first-hand experience in dealing with terrorism, be included in any consideration. With respect to individuals who are at high risk as potential targets to be taken hostage by terrorists, it is believed that this behavioral science approach, in drawing on the above sources, would provide specific suggestions that would be helpful to the individual in a crisis situation. The experience of our Psychological Services Staff in developing a [redacted] program for Agency personnel exists as a base and a point of departure for a related effort in preparing people to cope with terrorist situations. In a preliminary way, we are already reviewing the popular and technical literature on the subject of terror.

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4. Meanwhile, we should like to offer the following specific suggestions to get this activity under way. It is proposed that:

a. Any existing case studies that may be available be provided to our office for review.

b. A survey of individuals who have been held hostage by terrorists be conducted, and that a determination be made as to which of these individuals may be available for interview.

5. It is our judgment that the initial survey phase appropriate for this effort will require no additional resources. It is likely however that certain additional funds may later be required for consultant assistance as the effort develops. We shall keep you apprised in this regard.

6. The Office of Medical Services appreciates the opportunity to assist you in this important matter. Our

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resources are at your disposal and we shall be happy to discuss the matter at your pleasure.

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JOHN R. TIETJEN, M.D.

JOHN R. TIETJEN, M.D.  
Director of Medical Services

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